

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP  
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**CAP: CAP Launch Review**

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**The IASC WG members are invited to provide their feedback on their  
recommendations presented in this consultant's report.**

## CAP Launch Review – acknowledgements

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I am grateful to all the interviewees who generously gave of their time and thoughts for this report. In particular, I would like to thank Lise Skinnebach, Susanne Frueh, Mark Bowden, Nadine Puechguirbal, Danielle Rollososon and Gloria Byas in OCHA New York; and Claude Hilfiker, and all the CAP Section in Geneva for their help.

### **Executive Summary**

The analysis contained in the review demonstrates that although CAP launches have made significant progress over the years, there are more Weaknesses (and these are more substantial) than Strengths in the current strategy and structure.

Launches fail in three crucial areas:

- Advocacy, by not conveying a strong message of human rights/needs to a broad – or new – target audience.
- Fundraising, launches have minimal impact on amounts of money pledged.
- Public Awareness of UN.

The Review recommends the following:

1. OCHA should go back to the drawing board in order to decide in what form and when the CAP should be launched to have the most impact. In particular, OCHA must resolve the ambiguity around the main elements of CAP Launches in order to make the strategy and structure more single-minded. Areas to review include: Objectives; Target audience; Single most important message; Appropriate launch vehicle and timing; Measurement of Return on Investment.
2. OCHA should carry out high profile advocacy campaigns to the general public each year. These campaigns would create a natural foundation for subsequent fundraising for the Consolidated Appeals. Serious consideration should be given to reviving an earlier idea of an annual “World Humanitarian Day” to be marked by the publication of a special UN Report relating to Humanitarian issues and challenges. And/or the publication of a “UN vulnerabilities Index” measuring the state of the world’s people most at risk.
3. OCHA should prepare an annual Marketing Plan that supports the Office’s fundraising, public relations and advocacy goals and incorporates all the campaigns into one integrated program. This plan should designate roles and responsibilities for individuals, set time lines and critical success factors for projects and specify criteria for investment and for measuring return.
4. OCHA should employ the services of a trained marketing professional to write and oversee the annual plan.
5. Consideration should be given by the DPI to a brand review for both OCHA and the UN to clarify and strengthen their respective external images.

It is further proposed that there should be a transition period of one year while OCHA is reevaluating the fundamentals of CAP Launches, in order not to lose any benefits that have accrued from previous years work on the Launches. During that time, there would be one Global Launch, supplemented by a simultaneous web cast of the event.

(ends)

## **Final draft - Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) Launch Review**

### **Purpose**

The main purpose of this review is to establish whether the CAP launches, as they are currently implemented, achieve their stated objectives and whether they are designed to achieve optimum exposure and impact.

The review examines the concept, strategies, targeting, implementation and exposure of the CAP launches for the past five years' appeals (2000 – 2004) in order to assess their appropriateness, value-added and effectiveness.

The review analyzes current practice, including objectives, selection criteria and organization, and develops recommendations based on the key conclusions.

### **Background**

The first Consolidated Appeal was launched in 1992. From then until 1998, the consolidated appeals were launched in an ad-hoc manner throughout the year. As part of an effort to put all consolidated appeals on the same annual cycle – in line with donor requests – all appeals were presented at a joint global launch in Geneva in 1998. In 2000, it was decided to organize decentralized launches taking place on the same day in various donor capitals, and the CAP launch became a multi-capital event.

The launch in New York is spearheaded by the Secretary General to bring more global media attention to humanitarian needs. The launches in other countries are intended to be local events, with local impact.

The objectives of the launches are as follows:

- To influence the decisions of parliamentarians who are responsible for allocating aid money, and increase allocations
- To increase awareness of humanitarian principles among the general population
- To demonstrate the added value of a multilateral response to humanitarian needs.

### **Review methodology**

The Review process which began in August, 2003 and was concluded in December, 2003 covered five phases:

- Desk Research - researching relevant reports and literature
- Interviews with key stakeholders in person or by phone
- Researching case studies of previous launches in two capital cities
- Attending 2004 Launch
- Report writing - revisiting and analyzing information and writing conclusions and recommendations.

#### **Phase One: Desk Research**

Information gathered around the CAP launches prior to the 2004 appeal was somewhat sparse in detail. However, summary reports were available, written by OCHA staff, providing feedback mainly on logistics/organization/media-related matters and these

formed part of the research materials, together with promotional literature and technical documents produced for previous Launches and Workshop Reports on CAP Best Practices and Lessons Learned

A number of studies that relate more to the CAP itself but do relate to and have some bearing on the launches were also researched – these are as follows:

An external Review of the CAP, by Toby Porter.

“Study Four: Changes in Humanitarian Financing: Implications for the United Nations” by Mark Dalton, Karin von Hippel, Randolph Kent and Ralf Maurer.

“The Quality of Money”; Donor behavior in Humanitarian Financing”, an independent Study by Ian Smillie and Larry Minear.

“According to need?” Summary report by James Darcy and Charles-Antoine Hofmann.

“Global Humanitarian Assistance 2003” (Development Initiatives, 2003).

Report of the IASC Review of the Consolidated Appeal Process, by David Boussiani.

#### Phase Two – interviews with key stakeholders:

Interviews took place in person and/or by phone with key stakeholders in New York, Washington, The Hague, Geneva and London between August and December, 2003.

Interviewees included:

- Donor representatives in USA, UK, Holland, Switzerland
- OCHA staff in New York and Geneva
- Other UN agency staff from UNDP; UNHCR: UNIC; UNICEF; WFP and WHO
- NGOs represented by Interaction; ICVA, SCHR, Interaction and DEC
- Beneficiary country: Ethiopia
- Media representatives in UK and USA

#### Phase Three – researching case studies of two previous launches

Consultant studied relevant documentation and interviewed key players re 2003 CAP Launches held in Bern, Switzerland, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2002 and The Hague, Holland, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2002.

#### Phase Four – attending 2004 Launch

Consultant attended 2004 CAP Launch in Geneva on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### Phase Five – Report Writing

Consultant discussed findings and implications from interviews and research with senior OCHA staff and Deputy Secretary General and finalized draft report.

### **Strengths of CAP Launches**

The review examines the strengths of the current system, set out as these relate to key stakeholders:

#### **Key stakeholder: Donors**

- **Demonstration of UN agencies working together.**
  - Representatives of donor countries interviewed mentioned a keen interest in fostering collaboration in the field between UN agencies, together with their firm support for OCHA’s coordination function. They see the launches as tangible illustration of agencies working together

- **Facilitates aspects of funding process.**
  - For example, CA proposals prepared for the Launches are perceived by the US (largest donor to the CAP) to be “a useful catalog”. This documentation collects in one place at one time all the information on which agencies are doing what work in which countries and is referred to by donors when making decisions about the allocation of funds.
  - CAP documents also speed the funding process since they enable Country Officers to justify their funding of an operation by using excerpts from the proposals (supplemented by a few simple additional questions asked by phone or e-mail) without having to request a whole new proposal.
  - Although it is generally agreed that CAP launches have a minimal impact on the total amount of funds donated, the Launch can have the effect of mopping up funds left in donor country budgets as year-end approaches.
  
- **Creates an opportunity for donors to talk with senior field staff (HCs).**
  - Donors see their local launch as an opportunity to arrange side meetings between their country desk officers and UN staff where more detailed questions can be asked than at the public event.
  - In addition, OCHA takes advantage of the occasion of the launches to organize additional forums for the aid community to come together to debate current aid issues such as “Access and Security”.
  
- **Creates a platform for donor countries to justify to taxpayers how aid dollars are spent.**
  - There are times when sponsoring a CAP launch can create a useful, natural public relations platform for a donor country. Usually, this platform is used by the host to make a statement about some aspect of their overseas policy that will benefit from association with the United Nations’ brand, and the humanitarian needs set out in the Consolidated Appeal. In 2002, for example, Switzerland used the CAP launch partly to promote their recent entry into membership of the United Nations to their own citizens and to the world at large. And often, in the past, host governments have found the Launches to be good occasions to announce pledges to the Consolidated Appeal. In 2003, for example, Ireland and Canada announced significant allocations from their overseas aid budgets.
  - Creating a P.R platform is a key reason why some donor countries agree to host launches (and also explains why others do not see an advantage for their government in hosting launches since they believe that their message about overseas aid is already well understood by tax payers.)

**Key stakeholder: OCHA**

- **Having to meet Launch deadlines (for delivery of Appeal documentation) forces collaboration in the field between UN agencies, and with NGO’s.**
  - Launches create a natural forum for OCHA, other UN agencies and NGOs to meet together to plan for the common good. Comments such as: “The CAP fosters coordination – planning together to prepare to

launch CAP is good coordination” from an HC, and “The Launch is an opportunity to confirm WHO commitment to an inter-agency process and to the CAP, which we consider a major fundraising mechanism” bear this out. The drop-dead date of the Launches forces completion of documentation in the field.

- **Puts pressure on the Heads of individual UN agencies to commit publicly to the concept of coordination.**
  - “We have been able to use the CAP Launch as a vehicle to get greater buy-in from the Heads of Agencies to the concept of coordination” says a senior OCHA official. This is supplemented by feed-back from OCHA staff on CAP launches which reveals that whilst rocky in the early days of the CAP launches, participation has improved over the years, as illustrated by this feedback on “What Worked Well” from the 2004 CAP Launch in Dublin: “Ruud Lubbers participation; he wore the UN ‘hat’ without any agency bias”.
- **Reduces cost of launches to OCHA.**
  - In return for a useful PR platform, donors cover out-of-pocket costs such as event publicity, venue hire, catering, etcetera. This can run to several thousand dollars. In addition, donors shoulder a lot of the organizational burden of launches.

#### **Key stakeholder: Beneficiaries**

- **Advocacy platform for attracting media attention to “forgotten” emergencies.**
  - Emergencies that the media consider newsworthy – floods, famines, earthquakes, outbreaks of war, etcetera will always receive media coverage and are thus relatively easy to fundraise for. So-called forgotten emergencies attract less attention. However, it is possible to create a news story about scale by pulling together crises. As recent headlines of coverage of 2004 appeal with the theme “Hear Our Voices” substantiates. For example, ‘*A UN appeal: Forgotten disasters: no news is not always good news*’ from the Economist; and ‘*UN appeals for ‘modest’ \$3bn to help 21 countries ruined by conflict and disaster*’ from The Guardian; and the AP wire story ‘*UN watches forgotten emergencies donors*’.

#### **Key stakeholder: UN agencies (and UN in general)**

- **Creates an opportunity to build greater, positive awareness of UN brand.**
  - CAP Launches are acknowledged by the media to highlight the humanitarian aspects of the UN’s mandate and operations, and to demonstrate the strengths of UN relief agencies working together for common humanitarian good. This is underscored by the Secretary General’s commitment to the global launch together with the attendance of Heads of individual agencies wearing a broader UN hat at regional launches.

- **Sets up a fundraising platform for individual UN agencies to use and also publicize their individual organization’s needs.**
  - This is particularly important for those UN agencies with less well-known brands (to the public) and fewer capabilities for fundraising, such as FAO.

In addition to identifying a number of strengths, the review process revealed weaknesses. These have been grouped together as follows around themes.

### **Weaknesses of CAP Launches**

- **Objectives**
  - Ambiguity surrounds the primary purpose of CAP Launches – some believe it to be Fundraising; others say it is Advocacy. It should be stated that this is probably partly due to the ambiguity that surrounds the CAP itself, as highlighted in recent reviews including Toby Porter’s study “External Review of the CAP” and the draft Report: “Changes in Humanitarian Financing”. Paradoxically, whilst most interviewees assume the main objective of CAP launches to be “satisfying donors needs...and fundraising”, there is general agreement that “the launches make no difference to the amounts of money that donors pledge.” Because of this ambiguity, key objectives for the CAP launch are not currently understood and shared by the different stakeholder groups (donors, beneficiaries, UN agencies, NGOs, and the media). Furthermore, because of a lack of shared expectations as to what a launch should achieve; one participant sometimes views as a failure an event that is seen as highly successful by another. Clarifying the objectives of CAP launches would not only help judge the outcome but also create a robust platform for taking other strategic decisions on matters such as targeting and messaging.
- **Current Strategies – Targeting**
  - Current targeting ambitions for the CAP launches are unrealistic. Too many audiences have been specified, each enjoying a different level of understanding of aid issues in general and the work of the UN in particular. For example, a knowledgeable professional civil servant has different information requirements from an experienced overseas aid journalist and from the average tax payer. Yet the launch seeks to treat all three as primary targets.
  - Pre-launch publicity is failing to find the right messages (or speakers) to attract “new” people. Speakers end up “preaching to the choir” since audiences are made up of people already known to, or involved with, the UN and/or with the delivery of humanitarian aid.
- **Current Strategies – Messaging**
  - The 2004 appeal messaging content was an improvement overall on previous years. For example, key points were circulated to UN speakers in advance to ensure a greater degree of consistency in keynote speeches. However, the fact remains that under the present launch

format, audiences are faced with several different speakers, discussing a number of different country situations and appeals - including “flash” appeals that have already been launched; ongoing appeals carried over from former years and “new” appeals. All of which makes it difficult for the audience to know what is the real UN priority, and what they are expected to do with all the information that is being given to them.

- Publicity material for the appeals is not always consistent in reinforcing a single-minded message. For example, the posters for 2004 made no mention of the theme “Hear our Voices”.
  - When the host country also has PR messages it wants to put across through the launch, the Appeal message can be diluted. A case in point is the launch of the Global CAP Appeal in Bern, in 2002. The site was chosen to coincide with Switzerland's entry to the UN; the event was beautifully planned and mounted by the Swiss Government and described as “brilliant” by one attendee from an NGO. On one level the media coverage was highly successful since a positive message about Switzerland becoming an active participant in the UN and helping with its global appeal reached approximately 2 million Swiss nationals, however very little global coverage ensued that related to the UN's main message about the CAP appeal.
- **Current Strategies – selection of themes**
    - Theme for CAP 2001 was “Women and War”; 2002 “Reaching the Vulnerable”; 2003 “Hope for the Future”; 2004 “Hear our Voices”.
    - There is no formal criteria to govern the selection of themes for CAP Launches. And current practice comes in for a good deal of criticism from stakeholders. One UN agency expressed a view that the themes are ‘anodyne’ another said “current criteria for selecting themes for the CAP launch are at best obscure; at worst top-down and not in line with our code of conduct”; a third considered the themes to date to be “irrelevant since they end up not being used, developed or properly publicized”.
    - Under the current system, OCHA consults with UN agencies before making recommendations to the IASC, who take the final decision without the benefit of direct, specialist input at the meeting from their own advocacy and fundraising experts.
    - Publicity material for the appeals is not always consistent and therefore does not reinforce a single-minded message. While some materials promote the chosen theme, other materials promote a separate message. For example, the posters for 2004 made no mention of “Hear our Voices”.
    - Themes to date have had little impact on media coverage.
  - **Current Strategies – selection of sites**
    - No formal criteria exists for the selection of sites for CAP Launches therefore what happens is largely subjective and reactions among stakeholders to current practices are quite mixed.
    - In practice, some countries make the list automatically for a variety of reasons, as follows: New York (global UN HQ and a base for many international journalists), Washington (seat of government for UN's largest donor, and media base), Brussels (seat of European Union), and Geneva (other UN HQ).



- The choice of other country sites appears to be made on the basis of whether a country is prepared to pay to host a launch and/or is subjectively viewed as an important donor. Decisions are taken by the IASC on the basis of OCHA recommendations.
- None of the stakeholders outside OCHA were aware of any criteria. A number subscribed to the view: “the process is very mixed and some countries are ‘on’ then ‘off’ right up to the last minute.” One fairly commonly held point of view was that “decisions as to which donor countries to include are being taken by Country Directors on the IASC but should be taken by Fundraising Directors – just as the program people should not be dictating the themes”.
- Feedback from those who either are working in the field or have worked in the field often promoted the view that “launches should take place in the countries where the work is being done – need to bring in the people at field level to allow for more technical discussion”. This view was supported by one of the countries that often benefits from CAP appeals – who felt that “holding appeals in country makes them more believable to the outside world”.
- **Media Exposure**
  - 2004 CAP launch generated more and higher quality coverage than previous years’ Appeals, largely by putting across a stronger and more consistent message: “UN appeals for \$3bn (to help 45million people in 21 of the world’s crises) which was reflected quite widely in media around the world. However, it should be noted that there is still a lot of room for improvement. The amount of coverage falls well short of what has, in the past, been generated by other Emergency appeals (by either NGOs or individual UN agencies), and by well structured PR-driven “Days”, with clear messages and objectives, such as World Aids Day.
  - CAP Launches suffer from a lack of anything that is truly newsworthy to announce, a plethora of confusing messages (as already discussed) and, to quote a very senior media representative of the BBC, “they are often Leaden. They consist of a panel of ‘worthies’, each of who makes an endless presentation. It can be an hour and a half before a journalist can even get to ask a question... and sometimes the meeting goes on so long that you have to leave without the opportunity to ask anything!”
  - The same source goes on to describe the appeal documentation as: “Lots of paper – usually uninspiring briefs not written in the kind of language that is journalist-friendly.”
  - With the exception of the Secretary General, the speakers are not sufficiently famous to drive global media coverage – although using speakers of local origin sometimes helps to drive local in-country coverage of Appeals.
  - There are often competing UN and NGO events held on the same day as CAP launches which distract the media.
  - Heads of other UN agencies, acting as guest CAP speakers frequently carry out separate media interviews when attending the launch. Some years, what they say in these interviews, relating to their own agency’s particular issues outside the CAP, overshadows the CAP appeal. This quote explains: “At the CAP launch in Copenhagen with Mary Robinson, we – OCHA – had no control over her bilateral schedule which meant that

we could not ensure that she was delivering key Launch messages throughout the day. I think this is a problem that other OCHA Focal points have experienced”.

- Despite the fact that CAP organizers have recognized the importance of enabling journalists to do pre-visits to the field, this seldom occurs.

- **Organization**

- Dividing the policy and implementation responsibilities between Geneva and New York, and between Advocacy and other parts of OCHA without clarity of roles and ultimate responsibility is causing confusion, delays, duplication of effort and things to fall through the cracks.
- Having to mount eight launches within 48 hours in different geographies is stretching OCHA's slim resources to breaking point and is arguably too much for the current staffing structure to implement properly. (Two of the host countries interviewed commented that OCHA should provide more staff to work with donors on preparation for the launch,)
- Strides have been made in perpetuating the message of the CAP outside the immediate time of the appeal; in particular, with the mid-year review. However, the impact of the CAP would be considerably greater if there was a concerted program to keep the Appeal in the forefront of donors' minds and the media all year round. (Happily, plans have been made to do more of this with the 2004 CAP.)
- Despite recommendations made every year in the CAP Launch reviews that work should start much earlier on the next year's Launch, and that materials should be circulated sooner – this does not happen
- The timing of the Appeal is often inappropriate for the UN's largest donor, USA, since the November date set aside for the Launch often coincides with Thanksgiving recess when politicians from the Senate and the House are on vacation.
- Although attitudes of Heads of UN agencies towards the CAP have become more favorable in recent years, as has already been commented upon in this report – there is still a perceived reluctance to prioritize CAP Launches. Agency Heads have been known to cut short the time allotted to visits, and to change plans at the very last minute. This attitude has a trickle-down effect that makes it harder for OCHA staff to get the full collaboration of mid-level UN agency staff in mounting the CAP. For example, with getting the collaboration of the UN agencies in securing the services of UN Celebrity speakers – whose presence has often been requested to enhance media coverage from CAP launches.
- While NGOs “are thinking more about the CAP and coming to see it as increasingly relevant” according to one representative “it still isn't clear what is in it for us. Should NGOs really become involved - is this a true fundraising mechanism?” The consensus of opinion among those NGO representatives who were interviewed is that they are prepared to support the CAP but it is not a priority. And could not become one without greater clarification of what the CAP is seeking to achieve and how NGOs can get meaningfully rewarded for their involvement.

- **Measurement Criteria**

- There is no system in place to measure the total cost involved in mounting the CAP Appeal Launches. While the out-of-pocket costs are

paid largely by the host countries – there are considerable other costs to the UN, some of which are not counted at all at present.

- These include:
  - Staff time for the CAP Unit in Geneva, and staff time for the HCs who have to travel long distances to host countries for launches (plus any impact of their absence on fieldwork projects)
  - Staff time for the advocacy units in both Switzerland and New York
  - Production costs of the materials
  - Staff time of very senior people at the UN: the Secretary General, and Heads of UN agencies who, in their capacity as keynote speakers also often have to travel long distances to donor countries.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The analysis contained in this Review demonstrates that there are more weaknesses than strengths in the current strategy and structure of the CAP Launches, and that the weaknesses are more substantial. Clearly, the situation calls for change, as was broadly acknowledged by interviewees during the Review Process.

But can the UN avoid “throwing the baby out with the bathwater” as one senior OCHA official puts it, who fears that significant and immediate change might result in losing the achievements of recent years’ hard work and investment by the UN.

In particular, OCHA staff quote two areas where the Launches have made considerable progress over the past eleven years, to be important to the success of the CAP as a whole,

These are:

- Better collaboration between UN agencies.
- Improved relations with donor countries.

To take each in turn:

### Better Collaboration between UN agencies

There is no doubt that CAP Launches have provided a forum that has helped to force inter-agency collaboration at the UN, and drive greater acceptance of OCHA’s coordinating function, as highlighted in the “Strengths” section of this Review.

However, the picture is not entirely rosy! It became clear in the interview process that Launches are currently viewed as something of a “necessary evil” by many parts of the UN. Some Heads of Agencies who attend as Guest Speakers do so out of a sense of duty rather than a natural priority because it isn’t clear to them how beneficial the exercise is to the UN as a whole, or their agency in particular. While Fundraising directors of the larger, well-defined agencies feel that the Appeal element of the Launches gets confused with their own annual appeals and this sets up a barrier to their collaboration.

Judging by these reactions, there is an appetite and an acknowledgement within the UN of the need to *unite* around humanitarian issues but the CAP Launch format is seen as an unsatisfactory vehicle. In fact, a number of those interviewed expressed enthusiasm for keeping some elements of the Launch but contained within a very different kind of program – one where the central focus would be on Advocacy rather than appealing for funds.

#### Relations with Donor countries – through partnering

Working together with host countries on mounting CAP launches has proved a good way to build relationships and therefore trust, between staff from the UN and donor country representatives. Although this may not produce an immediate payback, it probably encourages greater funding of UN projects in the long run.

Any changes proposed to the CAP Launches must, therefore, include ways to replace those benefits donors currently get from hosting Launches.

The first benefit to Donors is that Launches offer a valid reason to bring UN experts from the field to meet with donor desk officers. The latter are motivated by the live interaction; the chance to ask questions in person and get detailed information about the work on the ground. (The US State Department put much emphasis on the importance of this in interviews).

However, canceling (or significantly altering the format of) the Launches would not preclude arranging for field staff to travel to donor countries to meet with field staff. In fact, this happens already outside the launches on some occasions and it could be argued that trips specifically set up for this purpose can be more focused as well as better timed to suit both donors and staff thus making them more cost-effective.

The second benefit to some donors from the present Launch format is that it creates a natural P.R. platform for the host government to make a statement about aspects of their overseas policy that benefit from association with the United Nations' brand, and the humanitarian needs set out in the Consolidated Appeal. For example, announcing the host government's pledge in response to the UN appeal.

However, canceling (or significantly altering the format of) the Launches would not preclude OCHA from working with donor governments to help them to find imaginative ways to publicize their particular contributions to the UN. For example, through working with their P.R. representatives to arrange media visits to relief work directly funded by the Donor Government's response to the Consolidated Appeal. And/or providing them with information, speakers, and specially designed materials for a particular government event.

Assuming the case has been made that there are other equally effective (perhaps more effective) ways of continuing to foster collaboration among UN agencies, and to support donors – the question still remains as to what changes should be made to the CAP Launches and how fast could these be implemented?

For example, Might it be possible to keep the basic structure the same yet make improvements to eliminate the weaknesses?

Or, should the UN abandon the present launch concept altogether in favor of something quite other?

At present, launches are failing in what are arguably the most crucial areas:

- Advocacy: they are not conveying a strong message of human rights/needs to a broad – or new – target audience.
- Fundraising: they have minimal impact on the amounts of money pledged to the UN.
- Public Awareness (of the UN): they miss an excellent opportunity to brand the UN as the global leader on humanitarian matters, and as the natural coordinator of humanitarian relief work around the world.

It is highly unlikely that keeping the basic structure in place but making minor changes to eliminate some of the weaknesses will address these failings. However, there could be value in a transition stage that allows OCHA time to go back to the drawing board to reevaluate in what form and when CAP Appeals should be launched and what safeguards should be put in place for any benefits that might be lost through the change.

This transition phase could consist of one launch in one location of a UN Global Consolidated Appeal. This would be designed to promote awareness of “forgotten emergencies” and be spearheaded by the Secretary General. There are ways in which the internet could be used to take this event out to people round the world in order to bring the Appeal within the reach of many other interested audiences - through a virtual rather than a physical presence.

For example, the event could be transmitted simultaneously to a number of other countries in the form of a webcast. (An internet broadcast of a live meeting to an online audience with the capability to participate in questions and answers; this virtual approach to conferences and training is being used more and more often nowadays by Corporations to span physical distance cost-effectively yet permit live participation, and there are a number of technology companies such as Microsoft who offer such a service.)

Or, the UN itself could put up a global website about the appeal with country versions tailored to local language to coincide with the launch.

Perhaps needless to say, all the other elements of the CAP which contribute to handling the fieldwork and raising money for humanitarian appeals would stay in place. That is:

- The documentation of emergency situations, to an OCHA imposed deadline
- The coordination of estimates agreed inter-agency of the amounts of money required to deliver effective relief
- The development of the Common Humanitarian Plan
- The coordination of aid planning and aid delivery by OCHA in the field
- Flash appeals (in country) for immediate emergencies, as these occur

Launches are failing because of ambiguity of purpose, and flaws in the way they are planned and structured. The following recommendations seek to suggest ways to honor the original concept but overcome the current challenges.

### **Recommendation #1**

***OCHA should go back to the drawing board in order to decide in what form, and when, the CAP should be launched to have the most impact. In particular, OCHA must resolve the existing ambiguity around the main elements of CAP launches.***

The primary aim of CAP launches should be re-examined in order to clarify the primary purpose and objectives of the events – is it to raise money, is it to press for change in humanitarian conditions, is it to please donor governments? What is the UN looking to achieve, above all else, from mounting the launch?

*NB: it is possible to achieve more than one aim at a time, but it is important to prioritize and be as single-minded about the overall priority as possible and view other objectives as by-products of the event.*

The primary audience for launches needs redefinition, and much tighter focus – for example, is it civil servants, or is it taxpayers? Both audiences are important to the UN but each has a very different level of knowledge about human rights, overseas aid, humanitarian relief work and the UN's operations. It is unlikely that one single event can please both audiences since what interests one audience will possibly send another to sleep. Who does the UN want to use this occasion to single out for attention? What do they already know/think about the subject matter? What do you want them to know/think?

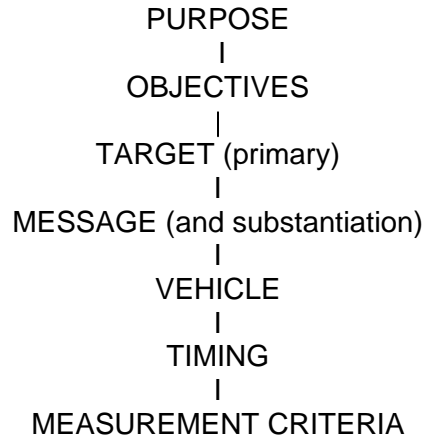
What is the single most important message to be delivered through the launches – for example, is it: “The UN truly appreciates all that your government is doing to help but we need you, the civil servants to ensure allocations of your country's money to fund the CHAPs for x, y and z countries”? Or, is it: “48 million people's lives are at risk because the government of rich countries like yours will not live up to its humanitarian obligations – use your vote/influence as a tax-payer to save lives by change aid appropriations?”

It should be noted that the more messages contained in the event, the less likely it is that the audience will a) understand and b) take any action.

What is the most appropriate launch vehicle and timing – for example, is it a series of private meetings with a few key influencers in the governments of major donor countries timed to coincide with budget allocation decision making? Or is it a public occasion with celebrities present to attract the media and the general public?

How will the return on investment be measured? What will be the formal criteria, and the process?

The following Campaign Planning Process is recommended as a guide to help the Event Planners to clarify their thinking and to use as a comprehensive but simple Brief for all those involved in staging the event.



As will be seen from hypothetical example that follows, the choice of “purpose” and of “primary target audience” largely determine what needs to happen in other parts of the process.

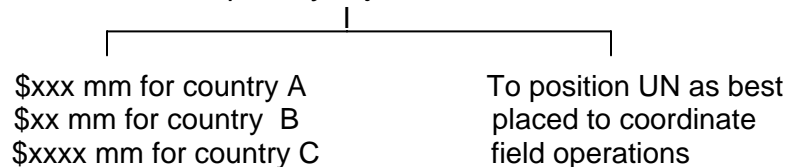
Let us assume, *for the sake of creating a virtual example of the process in action*, that it has been agreed by all those concerned that the primary purpose of the Consolidated Appeal is to raise more money from donor countries.

### Example A

#### *Purpose*

**Fundraising** - to substantially increase the level of funds allocated by donor countries for designated humanitarian programs, under UN leadership and coordination

#### *primary objectives*



#### *primary target audience*

Donor governments: civil servants and politicians

#### *single-minded message*

“Here are the facts about the urgent needs on the ground together with what it will cost to resolve the situations through UN agencies and ngo’s, under UN coordination ”

#### *substantiation*

Full documentation about the country situations, plus CHAPs

#### *vehicle*

Small meetings of experts talking to experts, country by country: senior UN members presenting to Foreign Affairs Committees and/or to right grouping of Civil Servants.

#### *timing*

Meetings staggered to suit donor budgeting cycles and local Government timetable

*measurement criteria*

Amount of extra dollars raised as a result of the meetings

The merits of a single-minded approach are immediately apparent. The campaign's sharp focus and targeting of a discrete audience (out of which the rest of the process flows naturally) set up the project for measurable success. And it becomes quickly apparent how this campaign exploits some of the potential "Strengths" behind the *idea* of the CAP whilst simultaneously overcoming some of the "Weaknesses".

At the same time, it is also evident that using the launch of the CAP to put a single-minded focus on fundraising will not help OCHA to deliver against the Advocacy and PR goals that are part of the Department's remit. However, these should be addressed through separate but complementary activities, which should follow the same planning process, as Recommendation 2 and Example B go on to show.

**Recommendation #2**

***OCHA should do at least two high profile advocacy campaigns to the general public each year drawing world attention to urgent humanitarian rights and needs. These campaigns would create a natural foundation for OCHA and other UN agencies to raise funds through subsequent targeted appeals (both to donor governments and members of the public) since the time-honored, successful fundraising model is as follows:***

***Awareness (of the crisis/issue) = Desire to give/help = money/volunteer support.***

***For one such campaign, OCHA should give serious consideration to creating "World Humanitarian Day." The idea is not new – indeed an attempt to do something similar on a small scale occurred at the Geneva Launch in 2000 - but it resurfaced on several occasions during the interviews and was embraced by a number of interviewees.***

***In order to attract the attention of the world's media, celebrities would need to be involved. And, there would need to be other media pegs for journalists to use to build indepth coverage, such as the publication of a special UN report covering humanitarian challenges and situations (along the lines of IFRC's "World Disasters Report). And/or the creation of a "UN vulnerabilities Index" to measure annually what progress had been made in meeting levels of humanitarian needs in countries designated at risk.***

***It should be noted that the organization and staging of a World Day would require tremendous resources to carry out properly. Probably the only way this could be achieved would be through getting the full cooperation and active participation of many of the agencies involved in humanitarian work (UN, Red Cross, and NGOs), under the leadership of OCHA. However, judging by the enthusiasm of many of the interviewees for such a concept, it would appear that this should be forthcoming.***



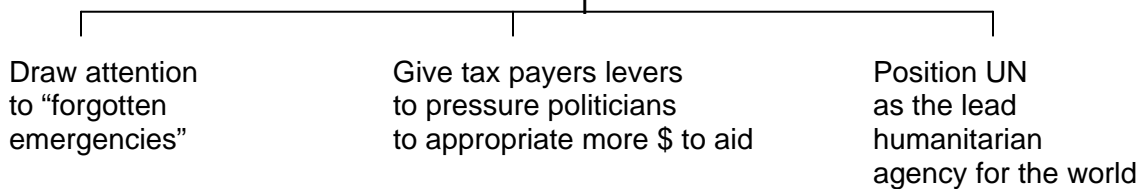
Using the proposed Campaign Planning process, as set out in Recommendation One, here is what the brief for such a campaign might look like:

**Example B – Advocacy campaign**

*(Primary purpose)*

**Advocacy** – to build awareness among the general public of the great numbers of people in grave danger and in great need of assistance from the rest of the world

*(Objectives)*



*(Target, primary)*

Tax-payers in the rich countries of the North

*(Message)*

“It is in everyone’s interest for more tax dollars to go to resolving humanitarian crises – vote for this on the special UN website today ”

*(substantiation)*

Vulnerabilities Index – updated annually to show progress (or lack thereof) towards aiding the poorest and most disadvantaged societies.

New annual publication – a UN report featuring Vulnerabilities index, pulling together facts and figures about populations in desperate need, discussing other timely issues relating to aid.

*(vehicle)*

Global Launch presided over by the Secretary General at HQ, supplemented by regional launches hosted by celebrities, marking the simultaneous publication of the report around the world.

Launch of dedicated global website, and specific country websites, publicizing the Report and inviting tax payers to express their views and place their vote

*(timing)*

On any day that could subsequently become “the” annual day on the UN calendar for raising awareness of humanitarian needs

*(measurement criteria)*

Votes cast on UN special site

Quality of global media coverage

Response of politicians to coverage (to be measured by annual tracking research study)

### **Recommendation #3**

***OCHA should prepare an annual Marketing Plan that supports the Office's fundraising, public relations and advocacy goals and incorporates all the campaigns into one, integrated program. Key elements of the program would be known OCHA activities (such as the Consolidated Appeal, IRIN activities, etc) together with individual Contact Strategies for the delivery of timely and relevant messages to specific target audiences. This plan should designate roles and responsibilities for individuals, set time lines and critical success factors for projects, and specify criteria for investment, and for measuring return on investment. It should be noted that this plan should assist cross-country collaboration on activities such as promoting the CA.***

Each discrete audience of people who are stakeholders in the success of OCHA – ranging from tax payers, civil servants, politicians, beneficiaries, other UN agencies, NGO's, to the media – should be the subject of an individual Contact and Messaging Strategy appropriate to their requirements.

In their present form, CAP launch events are too blunt an instrument to be able to deliver effectively against a wide range of audiences at one time. The events should be replaced by more tailored marketing activities – according to individual Contact Strategies - that would form part of a 12-month advocacy, fundraising and PR program (the OCHA marketing plan).

The concept of a Marketing Plan broadens the issue from “how to make the CAP launches more successful” to “what is the right plan to achieve OCHA's strategic goals through marketing such properties as the CA”.

The Marketing plan would define objectives, set out contact strategies, apply evaluation and measurement criteria, and identify the appropriate level of staff resources required.

Each major campaign within the Marketing Plan would need to be planned as an entity in its own right, with the appropriate structure and measurement criteria, as set out in the following process:

While campaign examples “A” and “B” set out in previous recommendations have been purposely designed to stand alone - integrating these together with other OCHA marketing activities into one consolidated Departmental Marketing Plan would automatically deliver certain additional benefits:

- Sequential timing and dovetailing of activities will produce a program where the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts. (For example, judicious timing of a global advocacy campaign will set up favorable responses to fundraising appeals).
- The department will be able to deploy slim staffing resources to best effect.
- The plan will create shared vision across Geneva and New York, encouraging and enabling separate divisions to work better together.

**Recommendation #4**

***To be successful, Marketing Plans require oversight and implementation by trained marketing professionals (rather than Advocacy staff or multi-talented fieldworkers). OCHA should employ the services of an appropriately skilled, senior marketing professional to write and oversee the annual Marketing Plan. This is a function that is understood within major UN agencies and NGO's and should deliver a high return on investment. This activity would be separate from but complementary to, and extremely supportive of, both the Donor Relations role and the Advocacy Department.***

**Recommendation #5**

***In the course of conducting this review, a number of questions relating to the branding of both OCHA and the UN arose which remain unanswered. Consideration should be given (by the DPI) to conducting a brand audit and review in order to clarify external messaging about the UN mother brand and subsidiaries.***

As has been stated in this review, the CAP appeal represents something of a missed opportunity to convey strong messages to a broad target market about the UN's lead role globally concerning humanitarian issues (including OCHA's role of coordinator on behalf of the UN).

This failure is not only because the current design and structure of the Launches means they end up "preaching to the choir", but also because it isn't clear what branding messages about the UN (and its various divisions) the organization wants an event such as the CAP Launch - or, World Humanitarian Day - to convey,

The proposed branding exercise would establish key values and clear messages for the mother brand the UN itself, and clarify how this should both feed into and derive nourishment from clearly defined sub-brands such as UNICEF, UNDP, WFP and others.

It would also lead to the opportunity to clarify the appropriate messages around OCHA's brand (as being complementary to the other UN organizations rather than operational in its own right). This would put OCHA in a stronger position in terms of its relationship with the other agencies.

(ends)

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